Colby says CIA activity legal

WASHINTON (AP) — Director William E. Colby of the Central Intelligence Agency said Wednesday the agency is engaged in activity beyond its mission of gathering foreign intelligence. He said the activity was legal, but he would not disclose what it was.

Colby would not deny that the CIA was operating within a U.S. domestic organization. Asked whether that was the nature of the operation, he would say only: 'CIA activities are being conducted within the limits of its statuatory authority."

He characterized the operation as a "small activity."

Colby testified before an open meeting of a House government information subcommittee.

His testimony came as columnist Jack Anderson disclosed that underworld figure John Rosselli's account of CIA attempts to kill Cuban Premier Fidel Castro in the early 1960s involves "cash payments, poison pellets, high-powered rifles and power-boat dashes to Cuba."

Rosselli testified Tuesday to the Senate intelligence committee. A member of the committee, Walter F. Mondale, DMinn., said Wednesday it has received no evidence directly or indirectly linking government officials outside the CIA to any alleged assassination plots.

In addition to disclosing the CIA's present non-foreign operation, Colby added information to several disclosures made June 10 by the Rockefeller Commission in its report on the agency's illegal domestic activities.

Colby said:

—A CIA agent the commission described as "an adviser in a United States congressional campaign" was invited unwittingly by the candidate to accompany him for several days during his primary election drive.

Colby said the agent reported on the candidate's activities to the CIA's operation CHAOS, set up to gather intelligence on the U.S. antiwar movement. He said the candidate did not know the "adviser" was a CIA agent.

Rep. Bella Abzug, D-N.Y., demanded that Colby tell the candidate about the "illegal invasion of privacy." Colby refused on grounds that identifying the candidate would disclose the identity of the agent, who has returned overseas on assignment.